

Minnesota's Lake Superior Beach Monitoring and Notification Program – an Evaluation

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Notification and Outreach Goal

**“Provide audience members information
and tools to facilitate healthy water
recreation decisions”**

**- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency,
year unknown**

Notification Methods



MN Beach Status (W. Lake Superior)

CURRENT BEACH ADVISORIES

Monitoring of Minnesota's Lake Superior beaches has ceased for the season, and will resume in May 2014.

Refer to [Advice](#) for further water contact recommendations.

Surf Minnesota's Beaches!



for current beach information visit:

www.MNBeaches.org

218-725-7724

HEALTH ADVISORY WATER CONTACT NOT RECOMMENDED AT THIS TIME

Date Posted:

Date Updated:



Due to the confirmed presence of **Coliform Bacteria**
For 24 hour information call 218-725-7724 or visit www.MNBeaches.org



Minnesota Lake Superior Beach Monitoring Program
www.MNBeaches.org



Outreach Methods



- Evaluation includes past outreach efforts
- Flyers, website, etc.
- Key messages

Purpose of Evaluation

- Assess fulfillment of goal
- Understand beachgoer perceptions
- Improve programming
- Required by EPA

Methods

- Formative evaluation
- Inclusion criteria
- 6 days in August 2014
- Quantitative survey
- In-person survey interviews
- Chi-square Goodness of Fit analysis
- Interested in tourist vs. locals, etc.

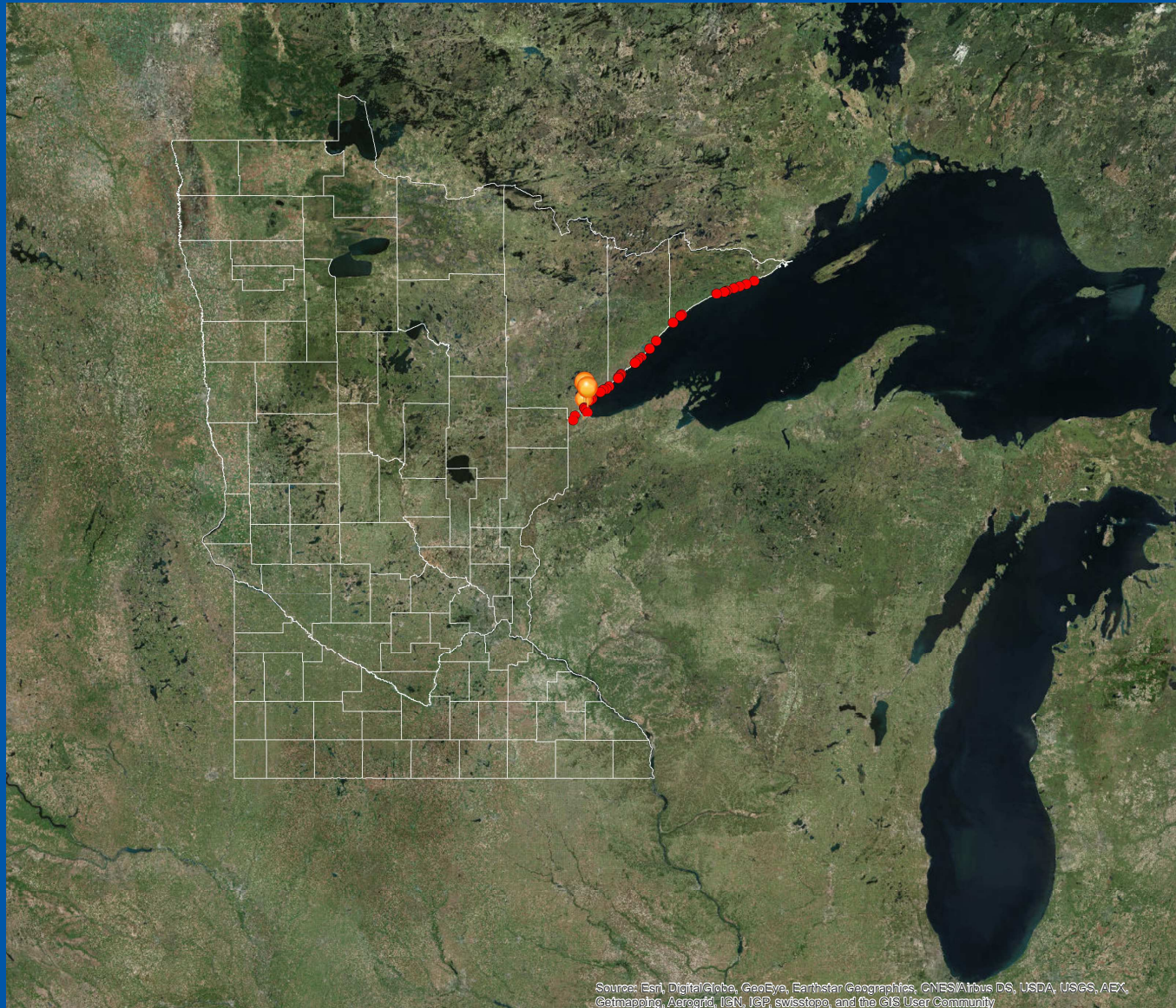


Definitions

- Tourist
- Local
- Advisory
- Visit frequency



Um, Duluth is where now?



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroX, GeoMapping, AeroGRID, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

Beach Selection

- Advisory history
- Selection criteria



Evaluation Areas



- Awareness
- Knowledge
- Risk perception
- Ways to improve

Results



Demographics (n=61)

Gender

Male	25	41%
Female	36	59%

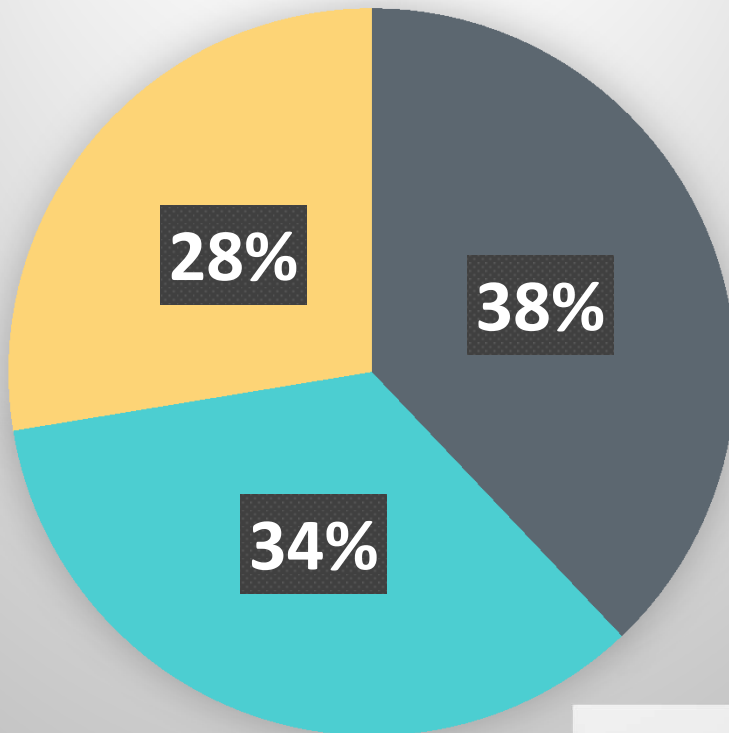
Age

29 & under	27	44%
30 - 49	25	41%
50 & up	8	13%
Refuse	1	2%

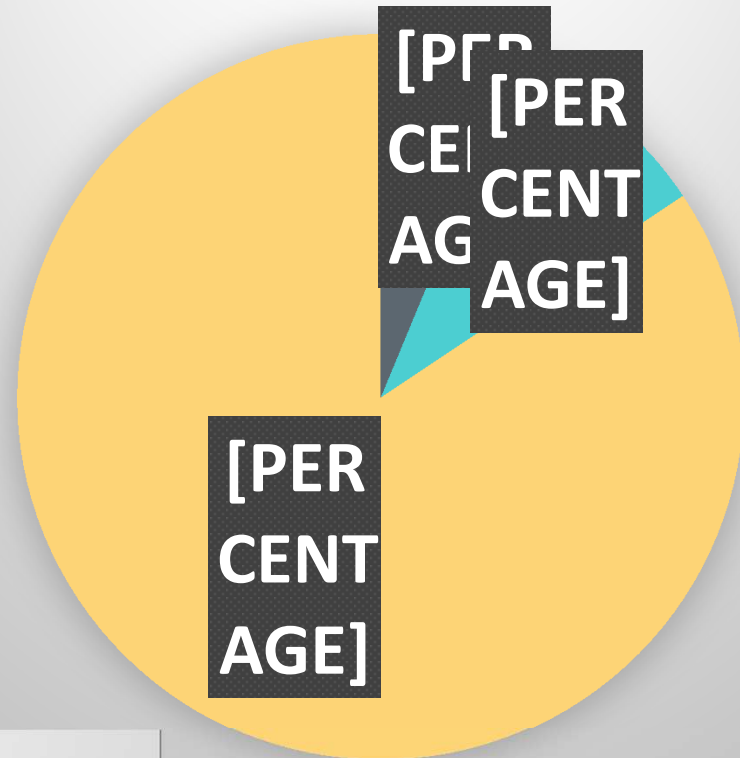


Visit Frequency and Residency (n=61)

Tourists



Locals

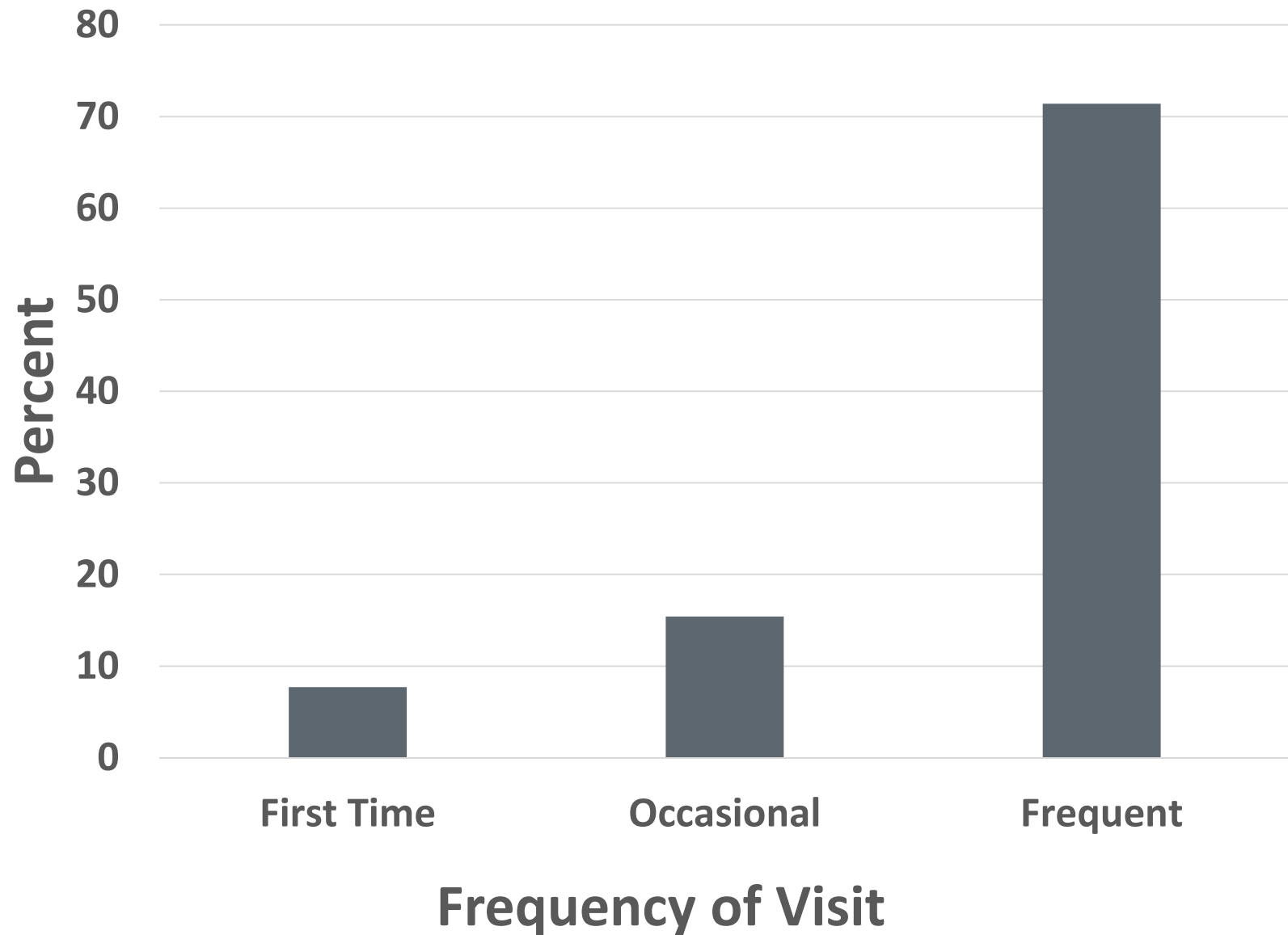


- 1st time
- Occasional
- Frequent

Evaluation Questions - Awareness



Heard of Beach Advisories (n=61)

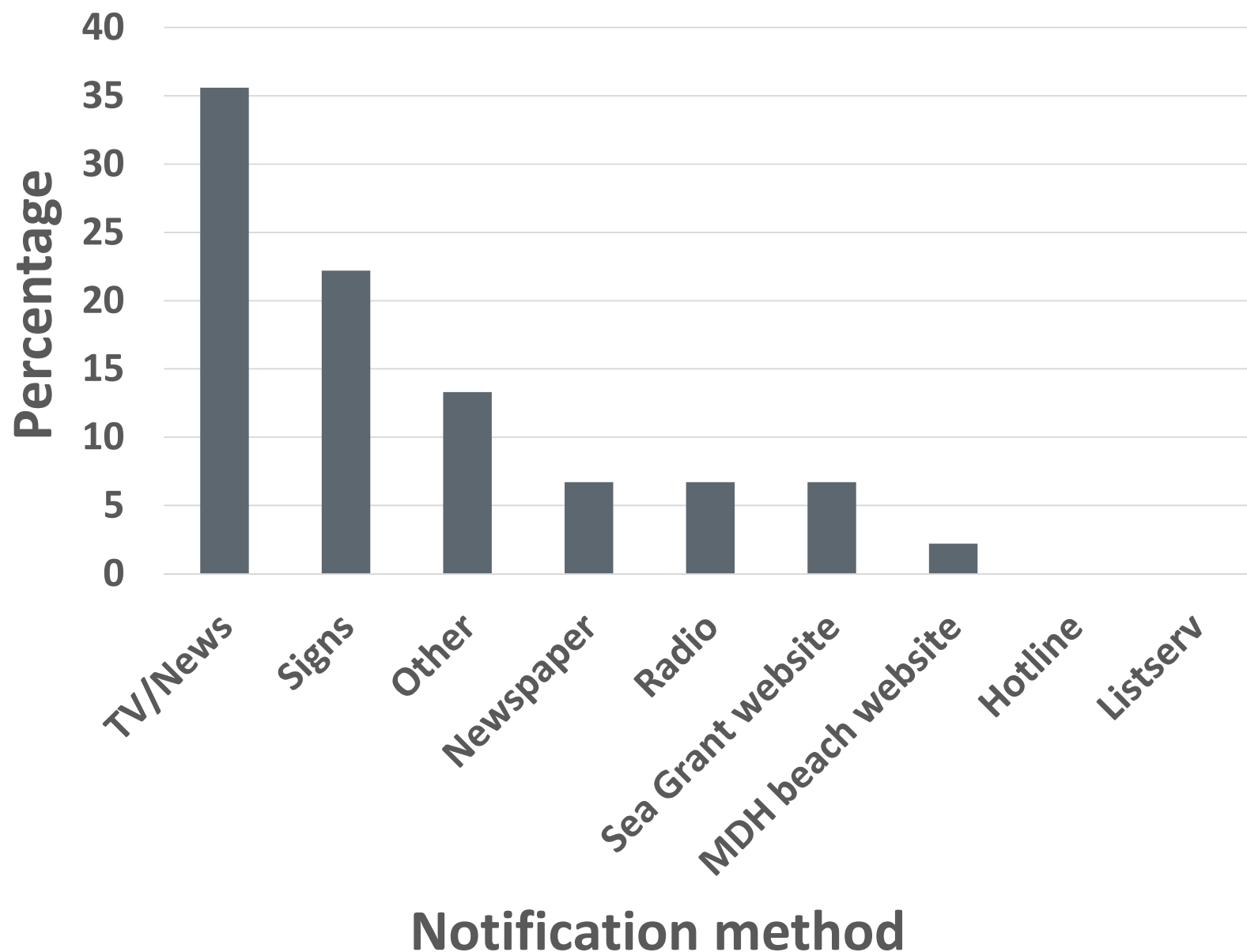


Heard of MN Lake Superior Beach Program

- 5 people



Ways of Learning of Beach Advisories (n=45)



Evaluation Questions - Knowledge



Water Safety Recommendation Knowledge (n=61)

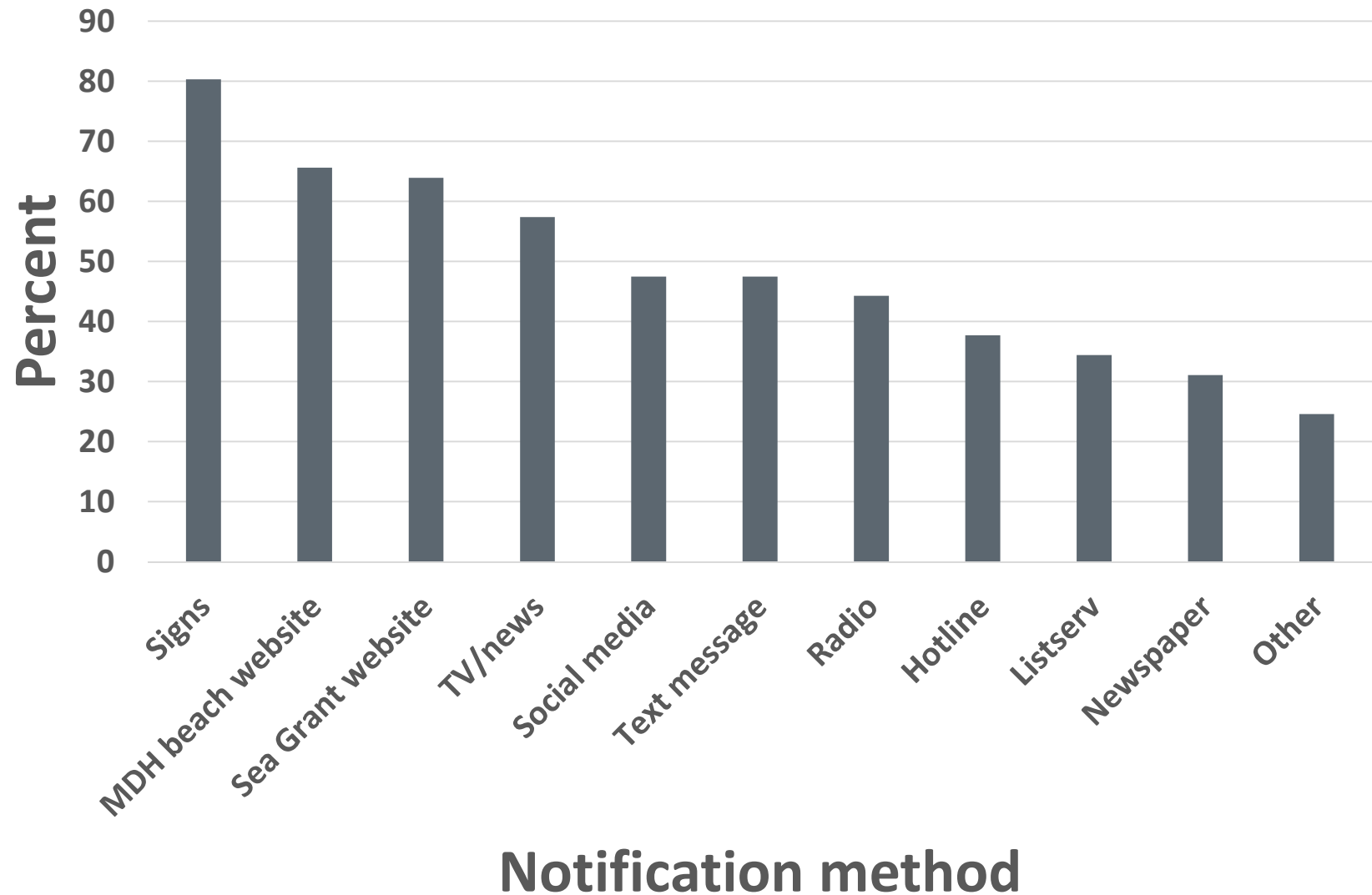
<u>Question</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>Not important</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Very important</u>
▪ Stay away from storm drains, trash and other pollutants such as oil slicks	0.0%	0.0%	21.3%	78.7%
▪ Wait 24 hours before swimming after a heavy rain	29.5%	26.2%	31.1%	13.1%
▪ Take your children for frequent bathroom breaks and wash your hands	8.2%	8.2%	39.3%	44.3%
▪ Shower after swimming or playing at the beach	4.9%	13.1%	47.5%	34.4%
▪ Keep your face and head out of the water or wear ear plugs and goggles	14.7%	50.8%	24.6%	9.8%
▪ Avoid swallowing beach water	1.6%	8.2%	49.2%	41.0%

Risk Perception

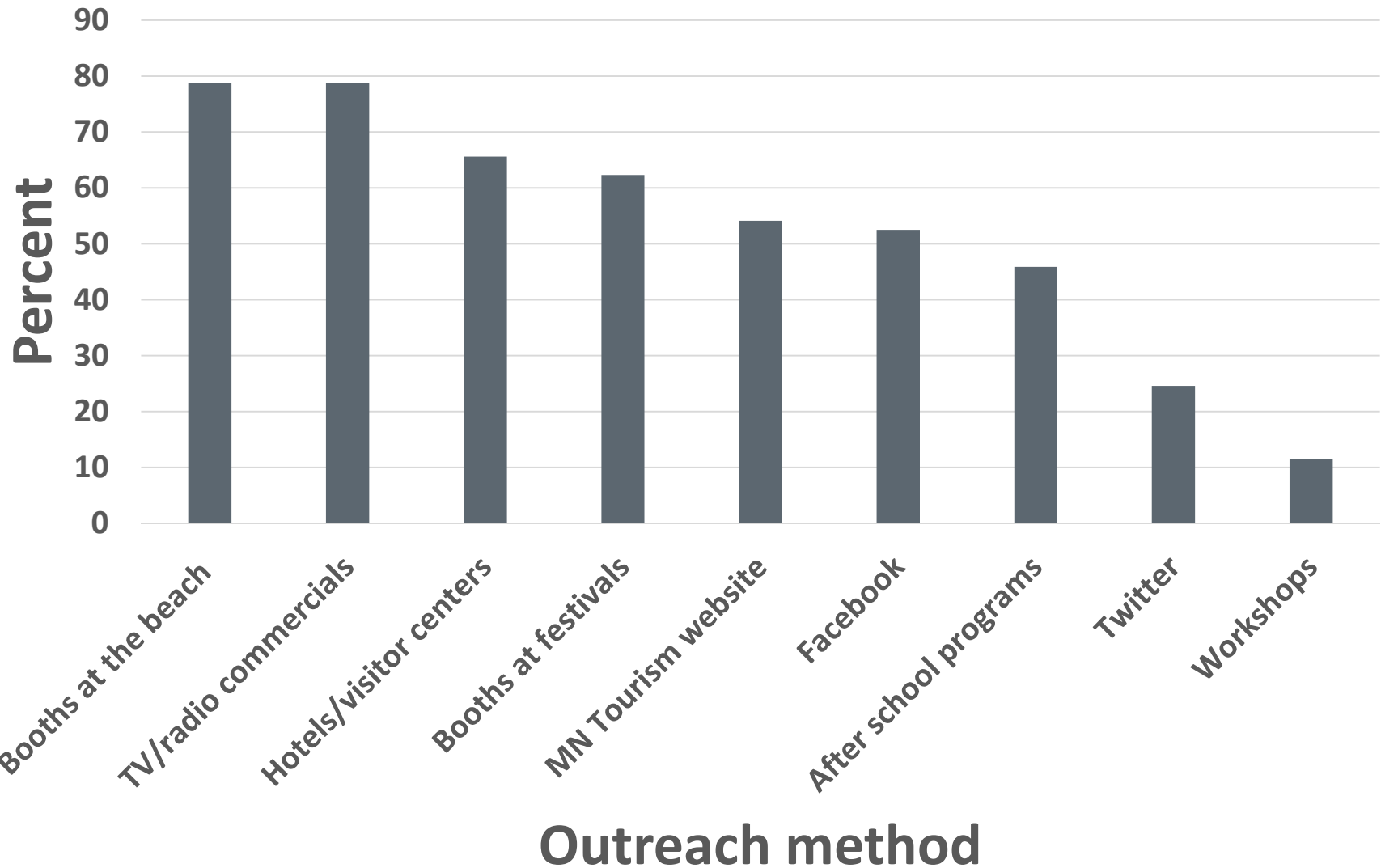
- Not at all or a little risky: 85.3%



Notification Resources for Future (n=61)



Outreach Resources for Future Use (n=61)



Conclusions

Awareness and Knowledge

- **Majority of respondents were frequent visitors**
- **Frequent visitors were more aware of beach advisories**
- **Frequent visitors mostly learned of advisories through TV news and signs**
- **Previous surveys identified varying knowledge of advisories**
- **News releases and signs important tools for advisory notification**
- **Discrepancy in what people say they've used and what they want to use**

More ways to improve

- Explore text message updates and social media
- Advertise websites more – people want to use them
- Streamline messages
- More dedicated staff time at beach and festival booths
- Need to reach out to tourists more
 - Link to Beach Program on MN Tourism website
 - Provide information at hotels and visitor centers



Limitations

- Results not generalizable
- Non-exclusive categories for visit frequency
- Less weekend survey days due to weather

Future Directions

- Ask questions with scaled response
- Ask respondents if they sought information regarding water quality prior to coming to the beach that day



Acknowledgements

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MDH

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